ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE PRESIDENT.

PRESIDENT : There are one or two announcements and statements I have to make before proceeding to the next item on the agenda. In the first place it is my duty to point out that we have received very strong suggestions from the Central Government and indeed it is of universal application that during the time of war no figures should be published regarding public utility undertakings, transport movements, movement of food stuffs and so forth. The profits earned by public utility undertakings, the places where those undertakings have to be started and such other things have necessarily to be kept confidential during the time of war and for that reason and that reason alone. I may say that the budget has been circulated only to the honourable members of the Legislature and has not been given in the manner in which they used to be given to the Press and the public at large, because it is impossible to separate public utility service items or to paste paper over such items in the budget and then present them to the newspapers or the general public. Therefore I hope that the honourable members will realise that the documents that they have in their hands, namely, the budget and the memorandum relating to the budget are to be treated by them as confidential documents. I trust that the members of the fourth estate will realise that this is a matter of a very special character which has necessitated to keep these documents confidential during the time of the war. and I trust that the inconvenience such as it is will be ignored in the circumstances.

The other point is that Government, for reasons which I need not dilate upon now because I have indicated them sufficiently well earlier, cannot possibly in the interests of the State answer fully questions as to what price was paid for rice in a particular place. Supposing for instance Government buy rice from Kashmir at Rs. 40, from Central Provinces at Rs. 30, from Orissa at Rs. 35, and so on. Government do not propose to make any profit whatsoever from these transactions. They do not wish to derive any profit either by way of buying or distributing the rice. Subject to that, the public will have to pay price for the rice according to the price that Government pay. A time may come, God forbid, when Government will have to set apart large sums of money for selling rice to people at lower rates than what Government had to pay. About 2 or 3 weeks ago it seemed very likely that there was no other alternative. It was thought that Government will have to set apart 3 or 4 crores of rupees for selling rice at a reduced price. That contingency will arise when it is a question of actual starvation. Unless such a contingency arises, Government do not propose to make any profit or loss by the rice transactions. Already we have purchased rice to the extent of Rs. 2 3/4 crores from various places beginning from Kashmir in the north, Sind in the west, Orissa in the east and Central Provinces in the middle. We have purchased rice from all these places at varying rates, so that it will be difficult to give exact figures for the price at which we bought rice. If any honourable member wants any special information he is at liberty to see the

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Chief Secretary or the Director of Food Supplies who will be always prepared to give exact figures. Government rely upon the members of the Legislature in keeping that information absolutely confidential. But Government cannot publish those figures.

Then I find that there has been a certain amount of misconception because queries have been put with reference to the Anchal Bill. In paragraph 18 of the Financial Secretary's budget speech it is mentioned that it is proposed to double the rate of anchal cards and covers. At present we propose to increase the rate to 8 cash for cards and one chuckram for covers. That is our proposal.

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS.

PRESIDENT: I have received notices of 11 adjournment motions. I have absolutely no objection to these being admitted for discussion. I may, however, say at once that most of them relate to food shortage, distribution of food etc. It cannot be gainsaid that the matter is of public importance. I have no objection to admit all the 11 motions and to give time for discussing all of them. But that would involve a serious infringement or curtailment of the time available to the House for the Budget. As an alternative, I am prepared to call upon those honourable members who have sent in the adjournment motions to speak first because of the urgency of their subjects. If that would answer the case there is no need for further discussion.

The following is the adjournment motion by Mr. T. P. Velayudhan Pillai:

> "I beg leave to move that the business of the House be adjourned for discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, viz., the serious situation brought about by the complete destruction of the paddy cultivation in Central and North Travancore, due to the unprecedented and continuous floods, and also the indispensable necessity of affording suitable relief to the agriculturists of the affected areas,".

This is, of course, very important if it is a fact. But, nevertheless it is not a question for discussion, by adjournment motion at this stage for Government are supposed to be the owners of every grain of paddy. There is no need for any complaint that on account of the complete destruction of paddy cultivation there is a loss of crop which would belong to any owner in the State, for, the Government are taking over all the rice. I mean we have come to the conclusion deliberately that half measures are no longer possible, that there should be a complete purchase of every grain of rice, paddy and tapioca within the State. We shall hand over to the landlord only a portion of the crop, whatever we consider to be necessary for his reasonable requirements and take the balance. We take the whole of the avilable paddy or rice in the State. So the question of the destruction of paddy cultivation does not arise.

Mr. Narayana Kurup has given notice of four or five adjournment motions. One of them is to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance *viz.*, "the panic distress, difficulty and loss experienced by

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